

John M. Lowe



John M. Lowe had a distinguished career for forty years in agricultural education in West Virginia as a County Agricultural Extension Agent, as a vocational agriculture teacher, as State Supervisor of Vocational Agriculture, and as State Director of Vocational Education. He retired in 1957.

In 1922, while Mr. Lowe taught vocational agriculture at Morgantown High School, he organized a “Young Farmer’s Club” for his Vo-Ag students. This and similar clubs in West Virginia became the Future Farmers of America in 1928. During his tenure at Morgantown, Mr. Lowe also conducted classes for adult farmers.

During his service in vocational education he initiated, administrated, and supervised a state-wide program of vocational training for the war industries. In that program, thousands of men and women were prepared in the vocational schools and departments for war production work in both agriculture and industry.

Through the war production training programs several million dollars’ worth of equipment was placed in the schools of West Virginia which became the property of the schools when the program was terminated. The Division of Vocational Education initiated and supervised the Institutional-on-Farm Training Program for veterans of World War II and the Korean conflict.

Mr. Lowe was a strong believer in adult education and encouraged all Vocational Agriculture departments to conduct adult classes.

He helped organize and served as local and state advisor of the Future Farmers of America and helped administer the Future Homemakers of America. Both of these vocational youth organizations ranked with the best in the nation as evidenced by awards received and national officers elected from West Virginia.

Mr. Lowe wrote the legislation which was enacted by the West Virginia Legislature authorizing the West Virginia Board of Education to establish and operate the State FFA-FHA Camp and Conference Center which was later named Cedar Lakes. He was instrumental in incorporating the West Virginia FFA-FHA Foundation to assist in raising funds to help finance and establish the camp. He served as the first president of the Foundation and served as managing director of the Foundation for one year after his retirement.

The recipient of honorary status from the FFA, Golden Horseshoe, and State Future Homemakers, Mr. Lowe was also named an Honorary American Farmer (FFA) and was awarded life membership in the American Vocational Association, the National Association of State Directors of Vocational Education, and the National Association of State Supervisors of Agricultural Education. He also received the Gold Watch Award from Sears Roebuck Foundation and a special recognition plaque from the West Virginia Farm and Home Electrification Council.